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PH.D. THESIS SUMMARY

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**The value and model preferences of the age group between the  
ages of 12 and 17 years in connection with the utilization of media**

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## Introduction: topics of the thesis

The thesis examines the value and model preferences of adolescents between the ages of 12-17 years in connection with the possible influence of the media. Psychological research in Hungary usually does not examine the value orientation of this age group in their own right, but analyze it together with some other constructs. The present study investigates the value orientation, models and main activities of adolescents, and then connects them to the media, as a possible influence of secondary socialization factor.

Socialization research of the past few decades proved, that the knowledge of rising generations of the physical and social world is shaped by their own experience, the influential behaviour of adults and by the mediator of culture and value system of the society, the media (Barrett and Buchanan-Barrow, 2005). The media should be considered as a significant social, cultural, economic and political dimension, which contributes to the interpretation of the world around us. They provide a framework for reality with their representation and a reference point to process experiences (Gerbner, 2000; Császai, 2002).

The media is able to symbolically represent the desires, beliefs, ideas and norms of ordinary people, and it also shows the common representation of these in the given society. Since it represents meanings defined by culture with simple images, media has a great influence on the values associated with everyday life tasks (Peters, 1989; Martín-Barbero, 1993; Simonson, 1996; László, 1999, 2000).

The so-called "downplayed" meanings of the values (Váriné, 2003, p. 15) include the connotations of the given values, on such way a culture requires the expression of a certain value in the behaviour. These "required or downplayed meanings" might give new meanings to the abstract values, which already include the stereotypical models of the culture about the expected appearance of a value. The media are able to demonstrate these meanings repeatedly, thereby forming the ideas of the individuals about reality (McQuail, 2003; Silverstone, 2008).

Most of the values conveyed by the media can be associated with the characteristics of the consumer society and with the parallel post-modern values, which can be characterized by the dominance of self-related and self-realization values (Inglehart 1997, Inglehart and Baker, 2000; Hankiss, 2000). The new values of the consumer society emerged in everyday discourse, and the celebrities became its most significant intermediary agents, who carry mainly the characteristics of the consumer culture in and on themselves (László, 1999). The length of watching television can become one of the main determining factors of choosing values. Those young people who watch more television, will choose an orientation person whose properties are the most similar to that of the persons shown in the media (Susman, 1984; Bryant and Zillman, 1986; Laschet, 1996, László, 1999; Gerbner, 2000; Signorelli, 2001; Arnett, 2002; Kósa, 2003; Berta, 2008).

Several authors note that one of the main characteristics of consumer culture is that the importance of material goods, the possession of the items has become overwhelming (see, eg. Lakaschus, 1969; Cathelat and Cadet, 1968; Dittmar, 1992; Kilbourne, 1999; Bajomi-Lazarus, 2006; Silverstone, 2008), while in welfare societies the concept of happiness is linked to material goods (see, eg. Sheldon and McGregor, 2000, Székely, 2003; Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003; Spencer-Rodgers et al, 2004; Kahneman, et al. 2006). Research on the phenomenon of social welfare shows that consumption habits become increasingly divergent and the objects are attributed with richer symbolic meaning (see, eg. Sheth, 1983; Elias, 1987; Korthals, 1991; Woolley, 1992; Van Raaij, 1993; Firat, 1993; Appadurai, 1996, Miller and Rose, 1997).

The influence of media on values prevails in children and adolescents. One of the reasons that young people, in the absence of experience are not prepared to the correct interpretation of the content of the media on any emotional or cognitive level. (Elkind, 1981; Gerbner, 1973; Kósa, 2005b). In addition, the influence of mass media among the adolescents is more dominant in many areas than as of the traditional agents of socialization. The young people acquire knowledge from a much broader scope than before, and there are development related specifics in which parents and teachers do not have an insight (Riesman, 1996; Vajda, 2005; Kósa, 2005).

The empirical part of the thesis is based on a study conducted in 2005, therefore the results concerning the media utilization of adolescents are affected by the characteristics of that period. The thesis mainly examines the influence of television on socialization. Despite the fact that in the recent decades several new media have appeared, the results of this study show, that television is still dominant in prevalence and the length of utilization, which was facilitated by the advances in technology and also by the preferences of the viewers (Bernhoff et al., 1998; Tarpley, 2001; Buckingham, 2002; Jenei, 2008).

In 2005, the penetration of the internet in Hungary was significantly lower compared to that of the television (source: NRC market research, internet), and supposedly the habits of media usage have changed since then. However, despite the fact that internet usage has grown considerably among the population (including adolescents) (Kósa and László, 2010), based on data from the literature, we can state that today's digital age does not affect the influential power of television, especially in certain social and age groups (Gerbner, 2000; Csepeli and Prazsák, 2009). In addition, the symbolic environment created by television is more unified than that of any other media (Gerbner, 2000; Rosengren, 2008; Silverstone, 2008) therefore, its impact on socialization is stronger, displayed on several areas, and last but not least empirically more accessible, than that of the internet.

The content of most television programs is based on schemas, which are repeated year after year, and they are identical, regardless of the type of the program. Therefore their effect mostly depends on the amount of watching television, not on the type of the programs (Gerbner, 2000). The length of watching television and television content preferences are formed very early on, and can be considered stable later on, so they have a great significance in socialization (Rosengren, 2008). Typical to the adolescents that they prefer different media content than the other age groups, and also a different pattern can be observed in the length of utilization. The length of watching television continues to increase from childhood, reaches the culmination point in early adolescence, and then begins to decrease, and considering the entire life cycle, reaches its lowest point in mid adolescence (Roberts and Maccoby, 1985; Greenberg et al. 1993; Rosengren, 1994) Therefore the age groups examined in this study represented both turning points in relation to the amount of watching television

### **The aim of the study**

In this study, we were aiming to answer the following questions:

- which medium are dominant among the adolescent regarding the time period of media utilization?
- to what extent do the adolescents trust the information gained from the media and consider this information relevant in accomplishing everyday tasks?
- is there a connection between the length of utilization and the trust in the given media?
- what are the dominant values of the Hungarian teenage population between the ages of 12-17?
- what type of role model do the adolescents choose?

- which values of the role models are given priority to and considered worth to follow?
- what do they consider as the most important matter which is close to their personality (this is referred to as „significant object or person” throughout the dissertation) ?
- which activity do the adolescents consider substantial in their lives?
- is there a connection between utilization of the media and personal values regarding:
  - personal values
  - role model
  - characteristics of the role model
  - the selected significant object or person
  - the most important activity?
- is there an age related difference in the:
  - characteristics of the utilization of the media
  - trust in the type of the media
  - identity of the role model
  - characteristics of the role model
  - selected significant object or person
  - most important activity?
- is there a connection considering the different levels of values between:
  - the personal value orientation and the person of the role model
  - the personal value orientation and the characteristics of the role model
  - the personal value orientation and the selected significant object or person
  - the personal value orientation and the most important activity?

## **Preceding studies**

Since 1998 the research subject "The impact of media on children and young people" has been conducted five times with the support of ORTT and Nemzetközi Gyermekmentő Szolgálat Magyar Egyesülete, under the leadership of Dr. Kósa Éva and Dr. László Miklós. All these studies attempted to uncover the possible impact of media on socialization and examined a representative sample of the adolescent age group.

In 2005 we had the opportunity to join this research with our own questionnaire. In addition to the fact, that the areas analyzed by us overlap with the areas of the full investigation, we had the opportunity to use our own questionnaire based on questions about value orientation.

## **Materials**

2476 persons were enrolled into the study, and the model was representative for the age group attending school. The results represented in this dissertation are based on only the results where the subjects of the study answered all the questions relevant to the study (1837 persons).

The subjects of this study belonged to 2 age groups: 875 persons were in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade (between 12-13 years old) and 962 persons were in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade (between 16-17 years old). The distribution of the genders were: 953 boys and 884 girls.

## **Methods**

Four different methods were used in the study:

- to examine the utilization of the media the questionnaire about the utilization of media by Rosengren, Windahl and Sonesson (1989)
- to analyze the value orientation our own questionnaire was used, based on Schwartz's motivational value types (1992)
- to analyze the identity and characteristics of the role model the questionnaire by László Miklós (1999)
- to assess the significant object or person and the most important activity the questions of the Ishu-Ishiyama test (1988)

Development of our own questionnaire concerning values was based on the results of a previous study (Berta, 2004). The values from Schwartz's range of values were selected from among those which showed the least overlap with other value types. During the preliminary studies the subjects had to describe these values. The questionnaire was created by taking into account the frequency of these explanations.

## **Hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1: The adolescents included in the study consider television the dominant medium, both in terms of the length of utilization and how to obtain information; a correlation more typical to the younger participants of the study.

Hypothesis 2: We assume, that the factors of the questionnaire based on Schwartz's motivational values types show similarities and conflicts in a similar manner to the original questionnaire.

Hypothesis 3: The most important values of the adolescents' can be located in one of the following value types of Schwartz: security, benevolence, self-direction, achievement and power.

Hypothesis 4: The subjects of the study choose their role model from the media in a high proportion, a correlation more typical for the younger age group.

Hypothesis 5: The individual values are in connection with the identity and values of the chosen role model, the reasons to reject to choose a role model, the length of watching television, the category of significant object or person, and the most important activity.

Hypothesis 6: The identity and the characteristics of the selected role model are in correlation with the length of watching television, the category of significant object or person and the activity considered to be the most important.

Hypothesis 7: The category of significant object or person is in correlation with the age of the subject, the education of the parents, the length of watching television and the activity considered to be the most important.

## Results

### 1. The characteristics of media consumption

The results showed that the subjects of the study watched television for a longer period during all three parts of the day, than used the internet. This is partly due to the fact, that 99.9% of the sample population have television sets at home, and almost 60% (59.8%, 1098 people) do not have internet at home.

Considering the previous working day the test persons watched television for an average of 4.4 hours, which corresponds to the related national data (see, e.g. AGB results). As part of the question, if the subjects of the study are able to use the internet at home, use it almost as long as the others watch television (4.4 hours versus 4 hours).

The people who consumed television longer, than the average 4.4 hours per day, accounted for one third of the sample (531 persons, 28.9%), and the 7<sup>th</sup> grade was characterized by significantly more above-average TV consumption ( $t=5.19$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

More than half of the total sample (1018 people, 55.4%) always believes what they see on television news programs, in contrast, only 17.1% declared the same about the internet (315 people). Age differences were also found: it was significantly more characteristic of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade to always believe what they see on television ( $t=5.79$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

66.6% of the total sample (1223 people) thought that those young people who do not have a television at home suffer disadvantage, because this affects what kind of information and knowledge are achieved. 948 people (51.6%) thought the same about internet connection.

There was a connection between the two above-analyzed opinions: those who are more likely to believe the television, would rather consider it to be worse if someone does not have a television ( $r=0.5$ ,  $\chi^2=4.5$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

### 2. Values

#### 2.1. Connections between the values

The items of our own questionnaire of personal values were based on the abstract values of the Schwartz Value Survey. According to the homogeneity assessment the items of nine item scale measured in the same direction, while the adaptation scale was proved to be invalid by the results of the item-analysis.

We assume that the same statistical similarities and conflicts can be detected in the scales of our own questionnaire than that of the original Schwartz's motivational value types. According to the results the following values types showed statistical similarities:

- achievement and power ( $r=0.54$ ;  $p<0.05$ )

- security and benevolence ( $r=0,72$ ;  $p<0,001$ )
- self-direction and achievement ( $r=0,68$ ;  $p<0,001$ )

Of the above, the first relationship could be detected in the original Schwartz value types.

There was a conflict in the case of the following factors, therefore the dominance of one value resulted in low evaluation of the dichotomy:

- self-direction versus security ( $r=-0,71$ ;  $p<0,001$ )
- achievement versus benevolence ( $r=-0,60$ ;  $p<0,05$ )
- hedonism versus tradition ( $r=-0,52$ ;  $p<0,05$ )

All three of the above mentioned conflicts also emerged between the original values types of Schwartz. In the remaining two cases conflicts were not detected according to our study, therefore contrary to the original Schwartz questionnaire, our results did not show conflict between the values of power versus universalism and values of conformity versus stimulation. Furthermore, in case of the later values it was not possible to perform statistical analysis.

The results suggest that our questionnaire scales showed similar content characteristics than as of the Schwartz Value Survey motivational value types. Complete identity was not anticipated due to the differences in methodological bases and the subjects of the study, hence it was not hypothesized.

## 2.2. Dominant values of the adolescents

We anticipate that the most important values of adolescents are located in one of the following value types of Schwartz: security, benevolence, self-direction, achievement and power

Similar to previous publications, our findings showed a somewhat ambivalent picture: in the values of the adolescents' the factors security (mean: 10.4, standard deviation, 1.73) self-direction (mean: 9.9; standard deviation: 1.69) and benevolence (mean: 9.9; standard deviation: 1.74) dominated.

Among the value types tradition (mean: 8.5; standard deviation: 1.86) and power (mean: 8.3, standard deviation, 2.08) were the least frequent.

According to the results mentioned in section 2.1., we can state that there are statistical similarities between the values safety and benevolence. Therefore, there are two main value orientations of the adolescents: one is in connection with personal relationships and the need for security, the other value is the direct opposite of the first one, it focuses on the individual's autonomy, self-related goals and self-fulfilment.

## 3. Role model

### 3.1. The identity of the role model

The role models were classified into three main categories using content analysis: 1. family 2.school 3. media. Those who selected themselves role models (1155 people, 62.8%) were distributed as follows: the family and the media category included almost equal proportions (511 persons, 44.2% versus 508 persons, 44.1%) therefore the adolescents opted role models almost to the same degree from their families and the media. The selection of role models from school was very limited, a total of 35 persons (3%) chosen orientation person from school.

Among the 7<sup>th</sup> grade 621 persons (70.9%), while among the 11<sup>th</sup> grade 534 people (55.5%) chose role model for themselves. Age differences could be observed in the categories of role models: the adolescents in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade were significantly ( $t=7.42$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) more likely to choose orientation person from the media than the older subjects.

### 3.2. Characteristics of the role model

The assessment of the characteristics of the role model was conducted along two types of categorization:

#### 3.2.1. According to the criteria of László Miklós

Characteristics of the orientation people were put into the following categories:

- Characteristics related to the individual: properties that are related to individual coping
- External features
- Characteristics considering interpersonal relations: properties that promote successful cohabitation and interpersonal interactions
- Properties related to the functioning of society: characteristics that govern the functioning of the wider community

Assessment of the total sample shows that the characteristics of the chosen role model mostly fallen into the category of the "individual-related characteristics" (362 persons, 19.7%), and represent values that are aimed at achieving the goals and desires of the individual. Values that promote interpersonal relationships were on the second place (295 persons, 16.1%), followed by external characteristics (153 persons, 8.3%), as well as professional competence (152 persons, 8.3%). The fewest, 55 people (3%) chose features which determine the life of society and the harmonious functioning of groups.

There were two main age related differences in the features of the role model: subjects in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade identified those values that are related to the individual life style of the role model significantly more often ( $t=6.42$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), while adolescents in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade were more likely to emphasize ( $t=4.95$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) the orientation person's external features.

#### 3.2.2. On the basis of Schwartz's value types

The characteristics of the role models described by the respondents were classified into Schwartz's value types by two independent encoders. Similarly to László's values, the values related to individual life style emerged from the others, namely the motivational value type of achievement (379 persons, 20.6%), such as self-esteem, success, influence, ambition, perseverance. The second most frequently occurring value belonged to the values of benevolence (209 persons, 11.4%): kindness, helpfulness, sincerity, understanding and altruism. The values of hedonism were on the third place (157 persons, 8.5%), namely the importance of enjoyment of life, humour, zest for life, beauty and entertainment.

There were two main age-related differences: the role models were rather characterized by the category of achievement by the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, although the connection is only  $p<0.1$  level of significance ( $t=4.46$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.1$ ). The older subjects were more likely to describe their orientation person with the value types of self-



direction (independence, freedom, individuality, self-decision, self-confidence, determination, individuality) ( $t=6.71$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

### 3.3. The reason for the rejection of choosing a role model

There was a high rate of rejection of choosing a role model in the total sample (668 persons, 36.4%), therefore the majority of the subjects of the study do not need a person who would provide guidance for them.

The answers to the question "why don't you have a role model" were listed in four categories:

- the 'undefined' did not categorically reject choosing or the legitimacy of a role model, but has not yet been able to choose, or not even addressed this issue
- the 'self-fulfilling' considered autonomy the most important, focus on the uniqueness and unrepeatedness of the personality, and often explicitly opposed to name a role model
- the 'confidants' consider themselves accomplished personalities, implementation of their future plans do not require the guidance of a role models. This type of response is often linked to the full and uncritical acceptance of their own personality.
- the subjects with 'high standards' could only create a role model for themselves out of many persons, or they have never known a single person who would meet their expectations

The explanation for the rejection of choosing an orientation person in most cases fell into the category of "self- fulfilling " (366 persons, 19.9%) more than half of the subjects who did not choose a role model puts the emphasis on autonomy, on the uniqueness of personality. For the same reason the second most common answer was self-confidence (182 persons, 9.9%), which is typical of those persons who consider themselves almost perfect, thus not requiring external guidance.

A comparison of the two age groups shows that the subjects in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade (417, 62.4%) rejected choosing a role model more significantly ( $t=8.91$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), than in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade (252 persons, 37.6%). Considering the reasons, there are two significant age-related differences: the subjects in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade can be less characterized by confidence when justifying the rejection of choosing a role model ( $t=9.05$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), so they do not feel their personalities as mature as the older subjects. In addition, they are less demanding in relation of the orientation person ( $t=5.91$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), they justify the rejection of choosing a role model to a lesser extent by that no one has yet fulfilled their expectations in this regard.

### 4. The significant object or person

We investigated the first answer to the question "What are the three most important things in your life which is yours, or belongs to you?", and after content analysis the answers were first classified into 27, then by pooling the content-related groups, into 7 categories:

- person of attachment
- personal item
- general articles
- communication tool
- objects expressing identity or status
- any characteristic or activity

Considering the overall pattern, two categories stood out from the rest: one third of the subjects (630 persons, 34.3%), named communication tools as the most important thing belonging to them. The second most frequent answer was the mentioning of the attachment person, 568 persons (30.9%) replied that their family, friends or partners are the most important for them.

There was an age-related difference between the two most frequently mentioned categories: subjects in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade mentioned significantly less often ( $t=5.04$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) the attachment person as an important thing in their life, and the tools of communication were mentioned significantly more often ( $t=4.14$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) as something important to them.

Afterwards the indicated responses were combined in more specific groups:

- materialistic (a communication tool, objects expressing identity/status, general articles, personal items)
- non-materialistic (attachment person, any characteristic or activity).

The question "What is the most important thing which is yours, or you belongs to?" could suggest that the expected in response was indication of a material possession. In 56% (1035 persons) of the total sample this trend could be observed, they indicated material things in their responses, and this was more typical of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade ( $t = 8.43$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The remaining 44% (668 persons), however, in spite of the suggestive nature of the "thing" mentioned non-materialistic entity as the most important thing.

## 5. Activity

Content analysis of the first responses to the question "What are the three most important activities in your life?" resulted in 6 main categories:

- relationships (including: to be with family, friends, partners, love, care, activities with animals)
- responsibilities (these include: learning, future-related activities, to help someone, the fulfilment of obligations)
- pleasure (including: fun, partying, relaxing, sleeping, eating, shopping, dressing)
- search for new experiences (including travelling, hiking, driving, riding, walking, loitering, getting acquainted, talking)
- sports
- utilization of the media (including: using a computer, watching television, playing an instrument)

The subjects mentioned sport in the first place as their most important activity, which is far superior to the other activities (481 persons, 26.2%). This was followed by the activities with persons close to them (335 persons, 18.2%), followed by the utilization of media on the third place (272, 14.8%). A significant age difference can be observed between the two activities: the activities related to pleasures (entertainment, recreation and meeting physical needs) were identified as important among the older subjects ( $t=5.60$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), while the importance of sports was more typical to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade ( $t=5.23$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

## 6. The connection between interpersonal relations and media-related factors

The tendency between the differences of quantified variables shows, that in case of the category of the chosen role model family and media are present at about the same proportion as persons of attachment and communication tools in the case of significant object or person, and in case of the most important activity

(excluding sport), activities related to the utilization of media and relationships. Therefore, considering socialization, the influence of mass media parallel with the importance of human relations can be observed in three important areas: in case of the orientation person shaping the vision of adolescents for the future, in case of the person closest to them and the activities determining their everyday lives.

## 7. The relationship of individual values with other variables

We assume that the individual values are related to the person and values of the chosen role model, the reason for the rejection to chose a role model, the length of watching television, the category of significant object or person, and the most important activity.

### 7.1. The identity of the role model

The identity of the chosen role model was in correlation with the individual values: those who chose orientation person from their family, can be characterized by values important in social relations (security:  $r=0.83$ ,  $\chi^2=23.8$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; and benevolence:  $r=0.64$ ,  $\chi^2=8.7$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and less often by values relating to individual performance and self-realization (self-direction:  $r=-0.78$ ,  $\chi^2=9.2$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). These connections were also evident in the context of the category of media role model: the subjects who could be characterized by the values of self-direction ( $r=0.80$ ,  $\chi^2=26.8$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), achievement ( $r=0.54$ ,  $\chi^2=6.8$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and hedonism ( $r=0.52$ ,  $\chi^2=12.7$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) were more likely to choose role models from the media and there is an inverse relationship between the safety-related values of the individual and the orientation person chosen from the media ( $r=-0.65$ ,  $\chi^2=16.9$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

### 7.2. The values of the role model

The results show that for certain values there were apparent relationships between the individual values and the priority values of the role model. The values important for individual success (self-direction:  $r=0.65$ ,  $\chi^2=12.4$ ,  $p<0.001$ , achievement:  $r=0.62$ ,  $\chi^2=21.6$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) also appeared in the properties of the role model and the values important in terms of interpersonal relations (security:  $r=0.72$ ,  $\chi^2=16.8$ ,  $p<0.001$ , and benevolence:  $r=0.58$ ,  $\chi^2=32.6$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) were also found to be important as values of the orientation person.

Similar correlations were found in the values based on the categories of László's classification: those subjects who mentioned values attributed to individual lifestyle as characteristics of their role models, were themselves increasingly characterized by the values of self-direction ( $r=0.81$ ,  $\chi^2=23.6$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and achievement ( $r=0.54$ ,  $\chi^2=18.9$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and less frequently by the motivational value type of security ( $r=-0.62$ ,  $\chi^2=34.7$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Those adolescents who mentioned external features as the most important property of their role models fell into Schwartz's category of hedonism ( $r=0.56$ ,  $\chi^2=41.6$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Those who characterized their orientation person with values which enable interpersonal relationships were more likely to be characterized by values of security ( $r=0.83$ ,  $\chi^2=10.6$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and benevolence ( $r=0.74$ ,  $\chi^2=31.7$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and were less likely to be characterized by self-direction ( $r=-0.57$ ,  $\chi^2=45.7$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Those adolescents whose orientation persons were characterized by values concerning the operation of the society, fell less often into the category of

hedonism ( $r=-0.52$ ;  $\chi^2=51.6$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Finally, those persons who found professional knowledge the most important in case of their role models, rather fell into the Schwartz's category of achievement ( $r=0.61$ ;  $\chi^2=16.9$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

### 7.3. The rejection of choosing a role model

Those adolescents who mentioned autonomy and uniqueness of the individual as a reason for the rejection of choosing a role model, can be rather characterized by the values of self-direction ( $r=0.72$ ;  $\chi^2=26.1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and achievement ( $r=0.81$ ;  $\chi^2=25.8$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and less frequently by the categories of security ( $r=-0.69$ ,  $\chi^2=45.7$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and benevolence ( $r=-0.54$ ,  $\chi^2=36.7$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). In addition, those subjects who think there is no need for the guidance of anyone because they themselves are accomplished personalities, could be characterized by the value of power ( $r=0.80$ ,  $\chi^2=32.8$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

### 7.4. The length of watching television

The results showed that those subjects who consumed television more than average, scored higher on the scale of self-direction ( $r=0.71$ ,  $\chi^2=19.1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and achievement ( $r=0.65$ ,  $\chi^2=7.6$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and were less characterized by the value categories of security ( $r=-0.58$ ,  $\chi^2=9.4$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and benevolence ( $r=-0.51$ ,  $\chi^2=8.1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

### 7.5. The category of significant object or person

Those subjects who considered the attachment person the most significant person were more likely to be characterized by the values of security ( $r=0.68$ ,  $\chi^2=13.6$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and less likely by self-direction ( $r=-0.54$ ;  $\chi^2=23.4$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Those who found properties which strengthen their identity or suggest prestige-related information the most important, had lower scores on the universalistic scale ( $r=-0.78$ ,  $\chi^2=32.5$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

### 7.6. The most important activity

The results showed that those who emphasized activities associated with human relationships, can be rather characterized by the category of security ( $r=0.76$ ,  $\chi^2=12.2$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and less likely by self-direction ( $r=-0.53$ ;  $\chi^2=54.3$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Those who found obligations a significant activity scored higher on the traditional value scale ( $r=0.58$ ;  $\chi^2=21.5$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). The importance of the activities related to pleasures has been accompanied by the appearance of the values of hedonism ( $r=0.64$ ;  $\chi^2=7.4$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and the importance of sport by the values of achievement ( $r=0.67$ ,  $\chi^2=21.7$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

### 8. The relationship between the characteristics of a role model and other variables.

We assumed that the identity and characteristics of the chosen role model are in conjunction with the length of watching television, the category of significant object or person, and the most important activity.

### 8.1. The length of watching television

The relationship between the two variables was investigated as follows: the categories of family and school were combined and opposed to the media. In both cases, there was a  $p < 0.001$  level of significant correlation between the category of the role model and the length of watching television. Those subjects who consume more television than the average, were less likely to select orientation person for themselves from the family or the school ( $r = -0.84$ ,  $\chi^2 = 9.3$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Those who watch television above the average typically chose role model from the media ( $r = 0.82$ ,  $\chi^2 = 44.8$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

The influence of the more than average television consumption also manifested in the properties of the chosen role model: those who watch television more than the average, referred to the characteristics of their role models as self-direction ( $r = 0.74$ ,  $\chi^2 = 19.3$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), hedonism ( $r = 0.53$ ,  $\chi^2 = 53.2$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), achievement ( $r = 0.57$ ,  $\chi^2 = 23.4$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) among Schwartz's value types, and personal life style ( $r = 0.70$ ,  $\chi^2 = 7.8$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), professional knowledge ( $r = 0.54$ ,  $\chi^2 = 42.1$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and external features ( $r = 0.60$ ,  $\chi^2 = 25.6$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) among László's categories. There is an inverse correlation between more than the average television watching and the value types of security ( $r = -0.69$ ,  $\chi^2 = 16.7$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and benevolence ( $r = -0.51$ ,  $\chi^2 = 16.4$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) according to the role model values of Schwartz, and the category of interpersonal relations ( $r = -0.68$ ,  $\chi^2 = 25.9$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) according to László.

### 8.2. The category of significant object or person

The adolescents who identified the attachment person as the most important thing chose significantly more often a role models from their family ( $r = 0.69$ ,  $\chi^2 = 23.5$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and less frequently from the media ( $r = -0.58$ ,  $\chi^2 = 18.6$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Those subjects who mentioned someone among their attachment persons as important to them, rather referred to security ( $r = 0.70$ ,  $\chi^2 = 14.7$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and less frequently to self-direction ( $r = -0.56$ ,  $\chi^2 = 23.9$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) among Schwartz's values in relation with their role model. Furthermore, the values of their role models rather fell into the category of László's interpersonal relationships ( $r = 0.65$ ,  $\chi^2 = 40.5$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and less likely to individual life style ( $r = -0.61$ ,  $\chi^2 = 32.6$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

The subjects whose most important possessions were means of communication, when describing their role models mentioned values mainly in relation with hedonism ( $r = 0.59$ ,  $\chi^2 = 13.5$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and individual life style ( $r = 0.63$ ,  $\chi^2 = 22.4$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

### 8.3. The most important activity

Those subjects who found the activities associated with interpersonal relations the most important, were more likely to chose role models from their families ( $r = 0.73$ ,  $\chi^2 = 9.5$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Those who placed utilization of the media to the first place, chose orientation people more significantly from the media ( $r = 0.52$ ,  $\chi^2 = 12.5$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Those who emphasize relationships with family, friends and partners among the activities, rather refer to the characteristics of their role models among Schwartz's value types as benevolence ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $\chi^2 = 9.7$ ,

$p < 0.001$ ) and security ( $r = 0.54$ ;  $\chi^2 = 11.8$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and to László's values related to interpersonal relationships ( $r = 0.539$ ,  $\chi^2 = 7.6$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Subjects who mentioned activities associated with pleasures as first, also found hedonism an important feature of their orientation person ( $r = 0.59$ ,  $\chi^2 = 10.3$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), and the same trend could be observed with the subjects who found activities related to the utilization of media the most important ( $r = 0.61$ ,  $\chi^2 = 12.6$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

#### 9. Correlation between the category of significant object or person and other variables

We hypothesized that the category of significant object or person is in correlation with the age of the subject, the education of the parents, the length of watching television and the activity considered to be the most important.

##### 9.1. The age of the subject

As mentioned above, more than half of the total sample (1035 persons, 56,3%) identified a material thing as the closest matter to his/her personality, and this observation was more typical in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade ( $t = 8.43$ ;  $df = 1$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

##### 9.2. Education of the parents

Contrary to our hypothesis, there was no significant connection between the educational level of the parents and the category of significant object or person.

##### 9.3. The length of watching television

The results showed, that those persons who watch television longer, than the average were more likely to select tools of communication as the most important property ( $r = 0.56$ ;  $\chi^2 = 24.5$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), and were less likely to mention the person of attachment as the closest thing to them ( $r = -0.70$ ;  $\chi^2 = 31.4$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Those persons who could be characterized by above the average TV consumption were more likely to identify materialistic things as their most important property in the category of materialistic or non-materialistic property ( $r = 0.81$ ;  $\chi^2 = 17.4$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

##### 9.4. The most important activity

Those subjects, who consider the persons of attachment to be the most important in their lives gave priority to activities related to human relations ( $r = 0.72$ ;  $\chi^2 = 31.5$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Those who considered means of communication the most important put activities related to the use of media to the first place ( $r = 0.74$ ;  $\chi^2 = 28.7$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

## 8. Discussion

Regarding our own questionnaire, we can state that when examining the correlations between value types similar relationship appeared than in case of Schwartz's value types. However, the analysis of relations between the variables showed one pair of values which could be really well-implemented, namely security versus self-direction. These two values could be connected to the other examined characteristics of adolescents in almost all of the topics. The rest of the range of values appeared in a scattered pattern, only in context of some partial results.

The dominance of these two value types could also be observed in the value orientation of the adolescents which can be associated with the age-related tasks the young adolescents are confronted with, who are both seeking to establish their autonomy and remain in context of their family (Havighurst, 1971).

The results of the high rate of rejection of choosing a role model can be linked to the previous observation, and the main motive behind this is the emphasis on uniqueness and autonomy. If the adolescents did choose a role model, than the key features of the role model were also related to individual coping. All these features are related to the character also presented by multiple authors in the XX-XXI. century whose most important characteristics are individuality, autonomy, self-fulfilment, and whom Riesman (1996) described as someone directed from the outside, Bell (1974) as hedonistic and Lasch (1996) as narcissistic.

The results show that the media, as a secondary factor in socialization, is in connection with the value-related characteristics of adolescents. In addition to television, generally, the influence of the mass media was also evident: answers related to the media appeared in a large proportion in the identity of the orientation persons of the adolescents, in the object closest to them, and in the most important activities.

It could be observed that the media associated category of significant object and the related activities showed a weaker relationship to the length of watching television, suggesting that adolescents do not emphasize only TV-related objects and activities, their utilization of media is much more complex. Thus, our study provides results not only on the use and power of influence of the most popular medium, the television, but also highlights the importance of other tools of mass media, which are common in the daily diverse media utilization of adolescents, while with their frequency give examples on today's presence of media.

Similar to previously published studies (Susman, 1984; Bryant and Zillman, 1986; Laschet, 1996, László, 1999; Gerbner, 2000; Signorelli, 2001; Arnett, 2002; Kósa, 2003; Berta, 2008), the proportion of the role models chosen from the media is high, which is more typical of those who watch television more than the average. In addition, strikingly apparent the almost complete absence of role models from the group of teachers and persons from higher cultural classes (scientists, artists). This can be considered as a warning signal in the sense that the above mentioned professionals are likely to have major effort and hard work behind their accomplishments; nevertheless, their careers are not attractive to adolescents who, on this basis, have little preference for performance-based life. Reassuring, however, the large number of role models chosen from the families, hence a significant proportion of future aspirations of the adolescents are still based on family models.

The impact of media is also reflected in the individual values, as shown, those adolescents, who watch television more than average, have similar values to those above mentioned character types for whom prosperity and personal comfort is the most important. This may be caused by the previously described relationship that

among the intermediary agents of the values of consumer society those celebrities have become the most important, who carry the characteristics of the consumer culture (László, 1999).

Although so far it has been argued how versatile the appearance of the media in the value related topics, the results also show that the attributes associated with human relationships are capable "to predict" much more, the appearance of web of relationships and attachment persons is much more richer in case of any questions than between any other features. Although the relationships are strong between the media related factors and other variables, in frequency the features of human relationships overcome them. Supposedly the fact behind this is that the world created by the media can be considered uniformed and homogenous (Gerbner, 2000; Kósa, 2005b; Bajomi-Lazarus, 2006; Antalóczy, 2009), thus their consumption and the worldview gained by it allows the development of poorer relationships along the respect for values and related characteristics.

#### 9. The limitations of the study and potential for further analysis

Two factors were highlighted in the study presented in this dissertation, which could restrict the implications and generalisations of the conclusions.

The results of the preliminary study which served as the basis for the development of the value factors provide the possibility of only one type of interpretation of the dominant values of Schwartz's value types. The explanations given by adolescents may have led to different results in case of a different population sample, therefore in the further analysis different patterns would have been observed between the values and other characteristics of the study.

The value explanations given by the subjects of the study, and the items based on the explanations attempted to "take in one direction" the value related abstract images recalled in the adolescents, which can be considered both as a limitation and a benefit for the study. Our value descriptions make responding considerably easier to the adolescent age groups, make the value orientation related questions more lively, and thus easier to answer. In addition, it is noted that if the standard Schwartz Value Survey has been taken into account during the investigation, it is possible that due to the unique value-interpretation of the subjects different results would have been obtained from the current individual value results. The heterogeneous value-interpretation of the adolescents presumably would have reduced the number of connections between variables and their scope of interpretation.

Another factor that may have influenced the results of the recorded data and the possible explanations is that the investigation was conducted in 2005. The study examined the impact of the most wide spread medium in Hungary, the television on socialization, which is able to create such a uniform symbolic environment, which has a more robust and wide spread effect on socialization than other media (Gerbner, 2000; Rosengren, 2008; Silverstone, 2008). In other respects, such as the length of utilization, such transformations might have happened, that could have altered the results if they were obtained from the data of a later study. According to the recently published result of the study 'The effect of media on children and young people' (Kósa and László, 2010) based on the results of interviews conducted in 2009 the number of internet users has increased compared to the previous numbers among the adolescent age group. In this light, a possible further investigation could be re-recording and analysis of the questionnaire in the context.



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